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US Environmental Protection Agency
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June 09, 2007

RE: Environmental Racism - Failure of Mark Hansen, EPA Region 6 Chief, To Take Action

Dear Sir,

I am writing about Hamilton Park, a predominately Black community in Dallas, Texas. Contamination has been discovered within the soil of Hamilton Park which is about 500 feet from the Texas Instruments semiconductor facility. The Hamilton Park Elementary School is less than a half mile from TI's leaking USTs. The nearby creeks, Cottonwood and Floyd Branch, are devoid of life, no fish, no animals, no insects. The sides of the streams are collapsing due to the lack of vegetation and roots to hold the soil in place. Some residents had reported catching deformed fish in the creeks until suddenly one day all the fish died.

The toxic chemicals discovered in nearby soil include - 1,1,1,2- Tetrachloroethane 1,1,1-Trichloroethane 1,1,2-Trichloroethane 1,1-Dichloroethane 1,1-Dichloroethene 1,1-Dichloropropene 1,2,4-Trichlorobenzene 1,2,4-Trimethylbenzene 1,2-Dibromo-3-chloropropane 1,2-Dichlorobenzene 1,2-Dichloroethane 1,3,5-Trimethylbenzene 1,3-Dichlorobenzene 1,4-Dichlorobenzene 2-Butanone 2,2-Dichloropropane 2-Chlorotoluene Benzene Butyl Acetate Chlorobenzene Chloroethane Chloroform (Trichloromethane) Chloromethane cis-1,2-Dichloroethene Dibromochloromethane Dichlorodifluoromethane Ethyl Benzene Heptane Hexachlorobutadiene Isopropanol Isopropylbenzene Methylene Chloride n-Butylbenzene n-Propylbenzene Naphthalene p-Isopropyltoluene. "Hot spots" of methylene chloride, dichloroethene, tetrachloroethene, trichloroethene, and vinyl chloride were identified.

The residents of the Hamilton Park community have reported many instances of health problems. Dizziness, drowsiness, skin irritation, tremors, kidney problems, sinus problems, cancer, and many other illnesses. Almost all of the residents have reported respiratory problems, some very severe. Many residents have already died. Many of those who have died had spent much time planting and working in the soil outside their homes. There are many vegetable gardens in the community.

Several EPA Region 6 representatives have been repeatedly contacted since January 2004 including Bob Johnson, Samuel Coleman, Robert Murphy, Richard Greene, Lawrence Starfield, Myron Knudson, Miguel Flores, Gerald Fontenot, Pam Phillips, David Neleigh, Robert Murphy, and Mark Potts. They have failed and refused to take action, instead abdicating responsibility to the TCEQ (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality). In turn, the local TCEQ representatives act more like agents of Texas Instruments, protecting the interests of TI instead of the environment. Mark Hansen, EPA Region 6 Chief, was quoted in the Dallas Business Journal (copy enclosed) stating that the EPA has no plans to investigate the Texas Instruments contamination and that the EPA's 'oversight' of TI and the TCEQ is in the form of telephone calls. And former EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman is now on the Texas Instruments Board of Directors and a lobbyist to the EPA.

Why does the EPA have an office in Dallas if the EPA representatives are going to throw all the contamination complaints to the TCEQ? What do the Dallas EPA employees do all day long? What does Mark Hansen do all day long? Why does Mark Hansen think that he's providing 'oversight' of the contamination issue by telephone, while sitting on his butt? When Mark Hansen says that the TCEQ does a "darn good job" does he mean that they are doing Mark Hansen's job for him?

This situation is Environmental Racism. Texas Instruments has ignored the suffering of the poor African-American residents in Hamilton Park, Dallas, Texas. TI cleaned up their contamination in Attleboro, Mass., which is 89.1% White. The failure and refusal of the EPA Region 6 Dallas representatives to take action is also Environmental Racism. If this had been an affluent White neighborhood, then Mark Hansen would have gotten up off of his butt and done something. Mark Hansen has committed race discrimination and violated the civil rights of the residents.

I am now requesting that the EPA send someone from another region or from Washington to investigate the TI-Dallas contamination, since the EPA Region 6 Dallas representatives have refused.

Thank you,

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